

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations in New York City

September 23, 2010

Good afternoon, everybody. I have already subjected you to one long speech today, so I will not do it again. But I do want to, as the President of the host country, the United States, thank all of you for your participation. And I want to thank Secretary-General Ban for hosting us. To all my fellow delegates and all the distinguished guests who are with us today, thank you for your leadership.

Mr. Secretary-General, I especially want to thank you for your dedication to pursuing peace, expanding security, protecting human rights, and advancing democracy and development.

Standing here, I am reminded of something President Franklin Roosevelt said shortly before the United Nations was founded. He said, "Peace can endure only so long as humanity really insists upon it and is willing to work for it and sacrifice for it." Over the last 2 years, our nations have come together in that spirit. We've shown the possibilities of working together in common purpose, from responding to terrible earthquakes in Haiti and floods in Pakistan, to carrying out peacekeeping missions, to focusing the world's attention on the upcoming referenda in Sudan.

But as we all know, our work is far from over. And in the months and years ahead, the challenges we face will require the work of all nations and all peoples. That's how real change happens. It will require the leadership of everybody in this room, because, despite our differences, our people, I believe, share common aspirations, to live in security free from fear, to live in dignity free from want, to provide for our families, and to realize a better tomorrow. And as leaders, each of us has a responsibility to answer those aspirations and to leave our children a better world.

And so I want to propose a toast to Secretary-General Ban and to the spirit that brings us here today; that we insist not only upon peace and progress, but that we are also willing to work for it and to sacrifice for it.

Cheers.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:58 p.m. at United Nations Headquarters.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : United Nations luncheon hosted by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in New York City.

Locations: New York City.

Names: Ban Ki-moon.

Subjects: Haiti : Earthquake, damage and recovery efforts; Haiti : International assistance; New York : President's visits; Pakistan : Floods, damage and recovery efforts; Pakistan : International assistance; Sudan : Darfur, conflict and human rights crisis; Sudan : Peace efforts; United Nations : General Assembly; United Nations : Peacekeeping operations; United Nations : Secretary-General.

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